

Task Force Meeting Notes

Subject: Northern Turnpike Corridor Task Force Meeting 6 (Virtual Meeting)

Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Location:

Public Viewing Location #1

Hilton Ocala
3600 SW 36th Ave.
Ocala, FL 34474

Public Viewing Location #2

Citrus County Building Alliance Banquet Hall
1196 S Lecanto Highway
Lecanto, FL 34461

Attendees

In Attendance	Not in Attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jared Perdue, Florida Department of Transportation • Christina Colon, Florida Department of Transportation • James Stansbury (alternate for Mario Rubio), Florida Department of Economic Opportunity • Jason Hight (alternate for Chris Wynn), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission • Mark Futrell, Florida Public Service Commission • Eric Anderson, Enterprise Florida • Scott Koons, North Central Florida Regional Planning Council • Charles Lee, Audubon Florida • Kent Wimmer, Defenders of Wildlife • James R. Maher, Florida Department of Environmental Protection • Nancy Brown, Florida Department of Education • Michael Napier, Florida Department of Health • The Hon. Matt Surrency, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services • Rusty Skinner, CareerSource Florida • The Hon. Kathy Bryant, Marion County • Warren Zwanka, Suwannee River Water Management District • Jennette Seachrist, Southwest Florida Water Management District • Jeff Prather, St. Johns River Water Management District • Mike Woods, Lake~Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization • The Hon. Valerie Hanchar, Ocala/Marion County Transportation Planning Organization • The Hon. Russell "Rock" Meeks, Levy County • Sean Sullivan, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council • Bradley Arnold, Sumter County • Philip Fulmer, Florida Trucking Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hon. Jeff Kinnard, Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization • The Hon. Scott Carnahan, Citrus County • Jim Patton, Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation • Dr. Vernon Lawter, College of Central Florida • Katie Troncoso, Volunteer Florida

In Attendance	Not in Attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christopher Saliba, Florida Rural Water Association • Bill Ferry, Florida Internet & Television Association • Danielle Ruiz, Florida Economic Development Council • Curt Williams, Florida Farm Bureau Federation • Dr. Stanley Sidor, Lake-Sumter State College • Paul Owens, 1000 Friends of Florida • Jason Lauritsen, Florida Wildlife Corridor • Zachary Prusak, The Nature Conservancy • Hugh Harling, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council 	

Text Format Legend:

Regular – Agenda description (staff/facilitator)

Italic – Discussion notes (staff/facilitator/Task Force member)

Bold – Action items

Notes

9:30 am	Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jared Perdue, Task Force Chair • Kevin Thibault, FDOT Secretary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jared Perdue welcomed everyone to the Task Force meeting. He introduced himself as the new Task Force Chair and is a member of the FDOT as the District 5 Secretary. He thanked Christina Colon for chairing the recent Task Force webinars and virtual meeting. • FDOT Secretary, Kevin Thibault greeted the Task Force and reinforced the commitment to this Task Force and thanked everyone for their input and work throughout the process. He reiterated the importance of public participation to the M-CORES process. He said he has been updated on the Task Force progress over the last few months and appreciated the dedication. Secretary Thibault said the Task Force will review and refine high-level needs and the comprehensive list of guiding principles to drive the paths and courses for presentation in August. These will absolutely guide us as we develop the M-CORES program. He recognized that through the COVID-19 situation, working together has been reinforced to get things done. People from multiple infrastructure disciplines have been working together to meet the changing needs in Florida. This is critical for the state and rural communities. • Secretary Perdue thanked Secretary Thibault for his remarks. He provided an update of the Task Force meeting plans. Three more meetings are scheduled between August and October. Future meetings will continue to be flexible in format to meet the concerns and restrictions of COVID-19. Secretary Perdue said registration for public comment was available until 2:30 PM. Additionally, he said as part of Task Force meeting 6 there were two locations for in-person viewing of the meeting and providing public comment in Ocala and Lecanto. • Secretary Perdue said the production team has used discussions from previous meetings to draft high-level needs and guiding principles. He reminded the Task Force to focus on content and commitment moving forward. During guiding principle discussion, a note taker will take real time notes and capture proposed changes to the principles. Task Force members should have received draft versions of the updated language through email last week. Minor changes will continue to be addressed in future meetings. 	

9:35 am	Introductions, Update, and Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christine Kefauver, Facilitator Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead
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- Christine Kefauver reviewed the agenda for the day. She went over the public comment period, which was scheduled to begin at 3:00 PM. Comments were planned to be received virtually and then at the two remote locations. The public was able to register to provide comments by 2:30 PM.
- Christine reminded attendees that the meeting was recorded and will be available later. She asked Task Force members to remain muted until discussion time where they can use the raise hand function when they wish to speak.
- Christine reviewed the meeting's agenda in detail. She presented a refresh of the Florida Sunshine Law.
- Diane Guillemette was available for the meeting to address any questions about the Florida Sunshine Law. Her contact information was shared, and a new temporarily phone number she can be reached at 850-559-0362.
- Christine completed a roll call of Task Force members.

9:40 am	Public Engagement Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will Watts, FDOT Chief Engineer
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- Will Watts reviewed and reassured the Task Force that public comment is important and comments from the public are being made available to the Task Force members. There have been many opportunities and ways to give input. The virtual meetings were scheduled to abide by social distancing but have been very successful in increasing public engagement and attendance as well. FDOT has recommended engagement for a project this large in order to move forward.
- Will Watts said the proposed M-CORES study areas cover 18 counties with about 3 million residents. Over 11,000 written comments have been received. The pre-generated form letter comments were grouped together.
- Will Watts said the synthesis of public comments have been categorized in three areas of interest to facilitate understanding of the comments. The first area of interest is traffic which include route locations, tolls, existing roads, transit, and hurricane evacuation. The next area is environmental which includes quality and impacts to wildlife and quality of life. The third area is general mentions which includes economic impacts, jobs, tourism, water/sewer, and broadband.
- Will Watts presented a graph showing the complete list of areas of interest. In the synthesis, actionable input comments were categorized by areas of interest, with wildlife/habitat interests being the highest and quality of life impacts the second.
- Will Watts mentioned that all data will be made available on the M-CORES website and was included in the Task Force member packets. He then opened the floor for any questions from the Task Force members.
- Kent Wimmer said that the breakdown doesn't give an accurate depiction of what the public is really concerned about because it seems like most of the comments address the no-build option. He felt that FDOT has discounted 80% of the comments by not classifying the opinions of these folks. He indicated that the presentation did not recognize the true nature of why people are commenting and recommending no-build. The way this has been presented did not help the Task Force understand what the public was telling them. Will Watts responded that no-build is always an option and that form letters were separated to help the Task Force members more quickly comprehend the topics and data.*
- Charles Lee commented on how extensive M-CORES public participation has been for both in-person and virtual meetings. The commenting capability has been robustly supported by FDOT. It is clear that the vast majority of commenters lean toward the skepticism of need and no-build. He said there has been a lot of negative energy around the idea that FDOT has not provided a count for these comments. He suggested FDOT address this by adding the number of people that have mentioned no-build. Will Watts responded that the sentiment can be gathered through the reading*

of these letters and most of them are form letters but FDOT would like to focus on what can be used and taken action on.

- Christine said that this is an ongoing conversation and she understood that the Task Force members are getting other public input outside of these meetings.

10:15 am	Refine High-Level Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead • Billy Burke, Task Force Support Team • Christine Kefauver, Facilitator • Task Force Members
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- Jennifer Stults introduced the previously drafted high-level needs based on past Task Force comments. She said these were provided to the Task Force and made available on the M-CORES website. She reminded the Task Force that the detail analysis of needs would take place in future phases/corridor studies.
- Before Jennifer Stults reviewed the list, she recapped the Task Force recommendations process which was initially presented in Virtual Meeting #4. She said the high-level needs are to be short statements that can guide the process in the future.
- Jennifer Stults reviewed the draft high-level needs and the changes that were made in Virtual Meeting #4. She says that the goal for this meeting is to refine and finalize these high-level needs. She also reminded the Task Force that the statute specifically mandates that Task Force recommendations address high-level needs, guiding principles, and instructions for project development and beyond.
- Jennifer Stults presented the eight (8) high-level needs and described how they were revised based on Task Force comments.
- Christine Kefauver opened the discussion by reminding the Task Force that the high-level needs are the “why” and that the guiding principles can be more specific. She asked the Task Force to identify areas that need clarifications as they look at list of high-level needs as a set collectively. She asked the Task Force members if the list of high-level needs represents the major challenges of the study area, and if there’s anything significant missing.
- *Commissioner Kathy Bryant asked, are these draft high-level needs ranked in any certain order? Christine responded that they are not in any priority order.*
- *Bradley Arnold expressed his appreciation on taking the Task Force input and making the revisions, especially statement #6. He supported the draft high-level needs worksheet as revised.*
- *Commissioner Rock Meeks asked, for the high-level needs, will the Legislature send out a funding mechanism for these high-level needs, or where will funding come from? Christine Kefauver responded that the goal of the Task Force is to bring voices to the table and the power of partnership. FDOT is leading this program and will work with partners. Will Watts responded that the high-level needs are the first step as we continue to work through the details. M-CORES has a lot of flexibility and broader scope than most transportation projects. Huiwei Shen commented that initial funding comes from dedicated resources provided by the legislature. Christine Kefauver asked the commissioner if that answered his questions. Commissioner Rock Meeks answered yes and thank you.*
- *Paul Owens stated in regards to the first high-level need listed, the statutory purpose of M-CORES refers to revitalizing not supporting rural communities. There should be something to revitalize rural communities and protect them from negative impacts, such as limiting interchanges, following comprehensive plans, and limiting sprawling developments and businesses that might pull away from existing local businesses. He comments that we should maintain the high standard as set by the legislation to ensure that more steps are taken to address this. He feels that the current high-level needs lower these standards. Christine Kefauver asks the other Task Force members if Paul’s comments raise any items to be discussed. Paul Owens added that it is in line with the legislature to be in consistent. **Jennifer Stults responded that the guiding principles discussion coming up next will include this topic but they can continue to refine the verbiage on high-level need number one.***

- James Stansbury mentioned that under the Suncoast Corridor there is a high-level need that says community identity, so rather than reinvent the wheel he would recommend taking a look at that to use in these needs. There is an overlap between the two areas, so perhaps using that particular need could be a jumping off point. Christine Kefauver responded that some of this is fleshed out in the guiding principle discussion. They are looking at the other Task Forces and there will be times when things can be shared and times when ideas are specific to a corridor.
- Kent Wimmer supported Paul's comments. Following the law is important and specifics on whether these corridors are needed should be determined. The Task Force has not established that the corridor is needed. He mentioned that the Suncoast needs are better than these and that since the corridors overlap the high-level needs should too. He suggested that #8 should be replaced with one from the Suncoast Corridor. Huiwei Shen responded that they shared baseline traffic conditions at Task Force meeting #5. These projections will be refined during the planning and project development process as we follow the Task Force recommendations. Traffic is just one aspect of the needs. We do understand your concern with the traffic and we can address that within the needs, guiding principles, or instructions. Kent Wimmer requested to replace #8 with "protect, restore, enhance, and connect, public and private natural resources and ecosystems." **Christine Kefauver noted that his comment will be captured and brought back to the Task Force.**
- Valerie Hanchar asked for Kent Wimmer to repeat himself. Kent Wimmer went over what the high-level need for the other Task Force was. Valerie Hanchar said she was able to write it down.
- Charles Lee said he knows there is a tendency to say that things will be addressed in the guiding principles and instructions discussion. He said he will not be satisfied on what is not addressed here and he wants these changes in the high-level needs. First, he commented on #1 that there needs to be a reference to local government comprehensive plans. He believes this needs to be inserted to reference consistency with these plans. His second comment was on #8 and was similar to Kent. He said the generic term natural resources is a huge catch-all and that coal, oil, and gas is defined here too and he is not sure this is what they are thinking about. There are specific things they have talked about such as conservation lands. Another one was habitats for endangered species, water resource areas like spring sheds and recharge areas. He recommended that #8 be longer and mention conservation lands, wildlife corridors, and recharge areas. He said please don't tell him this will be in the guiding principles as this would not be adequate and it needs to be in the high-level needs. Huiwei Shen thanked Charles for the specific comments and said that is exactly what we are looking for. She continued that she thinks we have this noted, but asked that Charles please be patient so we have a little flexibility to suggest how to address these comments with other Task Force members. Bradley Arnold added that in regards to comments for high-level need #8 and Kent and Charles' comments, he has no issues. However, he does disagree with Charles on high-level need #1. He suggested that the comprehensive plans should be in the guiding principles and not the high-level needs. Comprehensive plans may change based on the future of this project and the PD&E study may be more fitting in the guiding principles rather than high-level needs. Charles Lee said that he agrees that comprehensive plans change, but his reference to #1 is not to say that they don't change. Bradley's concern is resolved by the process, but whether it's an existing comprehensive plan or the need to change that plan based on the future of a corridor, he thinks that these needs should rely more on local governments and give them the opportunity to help guide the future of the project. Huiwei Shen answered that the collaboration between FDOT and local governments will be a two-way street. FDOT will work to support local visions and will work on the language to make sure that they keep the collaboration going and not lock anyone down into something the community does not desire.
- Jason Lauritsen commented that based on Charles' #8 comments, he supports explaining natural resources, but suggested not to get too specific to endangered species as to only include certain species. It should remain a little broader.
- Curt Williams commented that he doesn't see anything in the high-level needs to address agriculture. Agriculture is a top 3 economic driver, sometimes 1 or 2. He would like to see agriculture in the high-level needs, maybe in #4? Christine Kefauver asked if he would be open to us looking at that later. She said that they may address some of this later in the meeting, but it will

definitely be addressed. **Jennifer Stults commented that there is an agriculture item as a guiding principle, but we can look at where it might fit in the high-level needs.**

- Jason Lauritsen commented that making reference to agriculture lands should at least be included in the guiding principles. He supports being more specific but not too specific in reference to what natural resources includes in #8.
- **Danielle Ruiz requested to add to high-level need #5 “diversification of tax base.”** She commented it is important to recognize the growth of a tax base with new jobs or expansion of new businesses. She added that this lowers the drain on cost of services for the existing population. **Christine Kefauver noted that this will be added to the list for consideration.**
- Valerie Hanchar agreed to add agriculture to #4. She added that in Marion County, there are the horse and cattle industries and it should be added to enhance these industries. She then suggested to also check in with cities to see where they stand with this process.
- Curt Williams added that another growing industry is agro-tourism. He suggested that this could be incorporated in #4 also.
- Christine Kefauver concluded that we have been hearing how agriculture plays different roles around the area. We will work to clearly identify it in the high-level needs. We will consider the other comments as well and get back to you on that. If there are additional comments, you are welcome to send them to Jennifer Stults by next Wednesday, July 29th.

10:45 am	Review and Refine Guiding Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead • Billy Burke, Task Force Support Team • Christine Kefauver, Facilitator • Task Force Members
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- Jennifer Stults introduced the guiding principles. There are currently 18 guiding principles. The numerical order of them does not indicate any priority. She added that there were several subject matter experts available for the discussion. A draft of the guiding principles was provided in different formats to the Task Force. She reaffirmed that the intent of this meeting was to refine and provide an updated list of guiding principles before the next meeting. The ones shown in this meeting are a preliminary draft.
- Billy Burke refreshed everyone on the description and use of the guiding principles. He discussed a few ways that guiding principles can be defined and used to support the instructions for planning and beyond. The guiding principles were summarized by topic to help categorize the guiding principles for easier discussion. Task Force members can send comments or editorial suggestions to Jennifer Stults by July 29th to be included for the next Task Force meeting. Billy added that the first 4 are “cross-cutting” guiding principles and cover consistency with comprehensive plans. Billy read through these guiding principles. He added that comments from the discussion will be tracked live on screen.
- Christine Kefauver said that the focus is on the “cross-cutting” principles for this discussion. She then opened the floor for conversation.
- **Kent Wimmer recommended that the first guiding principle be amended. He said that local comprehensive plans should be respected and a new route should fit into the current plans and not assumed that the comprehensive plans will just change. He suggested that this is emphasized in the guiding principle. There are specific directives in the Wekiva Parkway principles that should be considered since it is a model for this project. Christine Kefauver responded that this conversation about instructions can be addressed in a later discussion.** She noted that in the meantime, suggestions can be sent to Jennifer Stults. Kent Wimmer then added that there are ambiguous conditional statements for protecting environmental resources, community character, and quality of life, but not for other principles. He suggested that these are addressed.
- James Lauritsen asked if #1 could end at “visions?” He asked if we could elaborate on what is meant by “to the maximum extent possible.” He said he is all for communities wanting to have

their own vision and be consistent with what is expressed in their comprehensive plans. Christine Kefauver responded that there are a few members from local governments to comment on that. Bradley Arnold commented that there are different views for these comprehensive plans. FDOT doesn't have any plans to go through comprehensive plans at all, so "maximum extent possible" means that FDOT will consider but may just push these to the side. This should be removed to prevent FDOT from overpowering these comprehensive plans. Commissioner Kathy Bryant agreed with Bradley Arnold. Commissioner Rock Meeks also agreed with Bradley Arnold. He added that comprehensive plans for a county and a local government (City/Town) are different. These local governments need to work together especially once a corridor is established.

- Paul Owens commented that Will Watts mentioned that the road must meet the need and financial feasibility test. Paul added that there should be something in the guiding principles that reiterates this as it is consistent with the statutory goals. Will Watts responded that it can be found in two distinct locations in Statute. He added that we have to complete both of those checks to meet the legislative statutes. **To clarify, he said it is in the law, but it can also be added to the guiding principles.**
- Charles Lee said he had comments on #2. But on #1, he supports removing the words to the maximum extent possible. But this is not sufficient to address the ambiguity of this plan. There is no statewide plan to be referred to, unless it is the 1970s list of aspirations that were noted as the statewide comprehensive plan. He disagreed that visions should be comparable to comprehensive plans. There are 3 kinds of plans that deserve to be followed – local government comprehensive plans, regional policy plans, and the state transportation plan. Billy Burke said to add a note that there should be more specificity on plans and removing to the maximum extent possible. Christine Kefauver added that there is a fluidity here for the intent of the guiding principle but they will work to clarify that. Charles Lee agreed and said one of the key outcomes from the Wekiva Task Force was an instruction to the local governments to go back and amend their plans. Billy Burke reviewed guiding principle #2. **Charles Lee requested that the 3rd part be amended where it says "where necessary", it should be changed to acknowledge that this is only when parts 1 and 2 have been exhausted.**
- Christine reminded the Task Force that there should be a full conversation in this Task Force for the people who are not on other Task Forces. She handed off the presentation to go into the lunch break.
- Secretary Perdue ended the presentation for lunch and asked everyone to stay logged in. He provided a resource for anyone experiencing a technical difficulty.

11:30 am	BREAK FOR LUNCH	
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1:00 pm	Review and Refine Guiding Principles (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead • Billy Burke, Task Force Support Team • Christine Kefauver, Facilitator • Task Force Members
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- Secretary Perdue welcomed everyone back.
- Christine Kefauver passed to Billy Burke to continue the discussion.
- Valerie Hanchar asked when members of the Task Force comment, do you want other Task Force members to comment? Billy Burke said yes, we want dialogue. Valerie Hanchar added, do you want us to just raise our hands or how should we handle it? Christine Kefauver said absolutely, use the raise your hand and we can call on you.
- Bradley Arnold said he supports Charles' proposed changes since it is consistent with the Task Force and also with previous FDOT studies in Sumter County. Billy Burke had Jenn Rhodes add a note that after "when necessary" in guiding principles #2 and #3 needs to be addressed.

- Charles Lee commented on guiding principles #3 and #4, asking where you would handle the tolling and transponders that would recognize locality of a driver. He discussed available toll technology for consideration. Billy Burke responded that the fear is to get into too much detail for the guiding principle. He suggested to deal with this in an instructions. Charles Lee suggested that the language of this guiding principle should cover this. Christine Kefauver added that it seems like this is covered in the wording. Charles Lee suggested to add the word “tolling” into the principle. **Huiwei Shen answered, that they will look at the language to see if “tolling” can be added, but the more descriptive language may be able to go under the instructions.** Charles Lee added that he thinks if the word “tolling” is added then that may cover it. Billy Burke responded that tolling is really part of operations, but added a note “(such as tolling)” to #3.
- Christine Kefauver asked if there was any other input for #3 and #4 from the Task Force, but no other comments were made.
- Billy Burke read the guiding principle #5 that is about community character, including context sensitive solutions.
- Charles Lee said that this guiding principle is the place to add agricultural lands. He responded to the wording “context sensitive solutions” that they mean something in the industry but it is an ambiguous term to people outside of the industry. If there is something like lighting and landscaping, it should be specified rather than using buzz words. The weakness of this instruction is that the solution is often going to be not to blaze a road through the middle of a community. Therefore, you need to think about incorporating the avoidance aspect into the instructions to lessen the pain if a road goes through the middle of the agricultural communities. **Huiwei Shen responded that this meeting is focused on the guiding principles but we will address the comments with more detail in the instructions. Billy Burke added that Charles was right and that the wording is industry jargon, so that needs to be considered.**
- Kent Wimmer pointed out that ambiguous phrasing “where feasible” should be removed. Christine Kefauver responded that this seems to be a recurring critique and that this wording can allow for flexibility and improvements, but they will look into this where feasible as well. Kent Wimmer added that you are providing an out that whatever FDOT sees as feasible, they can do it. In comprehensive planning, those terms aren’t allowed to be used because they are essentially meaningless. You are building a way to avoid the guiding principles with that wording. Huiwei Shen responded that it’s not intended as a cop-out for FDOT. FDOT is committed to following the guiding principles. She added that maybe in the instructions those details can be worked out.
- Billy Burke pointed back to Charles Lee’s request about adding agriculture, and asked if anyone else had a perspective?
- Curt Williams asked if Charles could repeat what he was proposing? Charles Lee reiterated to insert “avoid or minimize impacts to the rural communities, important agriculture lands, and attractions” for guiding principle #5. Billy Burke asked if there was a guiding principle for agriculture and if it makes more sense to keep that there? Charles Lee responded that would be fine. He added that he doesn’t think you need to keep repeating “where feasible” in all of these principles. In the statute, there are “weasel” words that make clear that the recommendations of the Task Force are to the greatest extent possible to be followed. It’s a given in all of these recommendations. You don’t need to keep repeating this.
- Christine Kefauver motioned to go ahead and jump to #13 where agriculture is covered.
- Curt Williams asked are the conservation lands covered in this or is it somewhere else? Billy Burke answered that it is covered in #8. He added that agriculture is different to different people and asked Curt if he was referring to the Rural and Family Lands Conservation? Curt said yes. Billy Burke clarified that this was covered in more detail in the instructions.
- **Charles requested to remove the “to the extent feasible.”**
- Matt Surrency added that there is a listing of what is considered pioneer farms and that there may be something that needs to be added to the GIS layers and Commissioner Meeks can talk about this more. Pioneer farms are farms that have been around for over 100 years. He added that there is a whole application process and that there is one farm in Hawthorne and a few across the state.
- Jason Hight asked what makes the agricultural lands, prime farmlands, and timber lands, mutually exclusive from one another? Billy Burke answered that the definition of these lands are

not that well defined in GIS layers. Jason Hight added that his office uses working lands a lot as a catch-all. You could say agricultural or working lands. This would likely encapsulate all of the other agriculture industries that have been brought up. Billy Burke asked how about something like economically viable lands? Huiwei Shen asked subject matter expert Xavier Pagan for input. Xavier Pagan agreed that broadening the definition is important. Some designations only exist federally if you are getting federal dollars. Legacy farms, or pioneer farms, are in a list from the state of Florida. There is a specific designation and this is a national designation. Huiwei Shen added that in the I-75 Relief Study they were identified as economically viable lands. Xavier Pagan added that the principle may include the definition rather than the term to make sure everything is included. He suggests to broaden the wording a little bit. Using the definition rather than the Prime Farmland jargon. **Billy Burke asked Jenn Rhodes to add a note to “broaden the definition” for this guiding principle.** Christine Kefauver asked Jason Hight if this gets to where you were encouraging us to get to? Jason Hight answered yes it does and Xavier mentioned some of the designations that he works with.

- Charles Lee added that he agreed with the idea of broadening the definition and removing the word “prime.” He does not think that there should be generic terms like “rural economic activity.” It should be mentioned using commonly understood agricultural operations, which would be encompassed by farmlands, cattle ranches, etc. It should be here and in terms other than buzz words. He did not want a situation where a type of agriculture is overlooked because it is not mentioned. **Huiwei Shen said this was a great comment and that staff will work through something for the Task Force to react to next time.**
- Valerie Hanchar asked where hunting lands fit in to these areas? Billy Burke responded that he doesn’t know if there is really something that is defined as hunting lands. Valerie Hanchar responded that some of the tree farms are leased out to hunting clubs. Goethe Forest has been hunted for generations. **Huiwei Shen added that’s a great point and has come up in previous meetings. Let us put some thoughts in order and see where we can work this into a guiding principle or instruction.** Valerie Hanchar also pointed out that the fishing industry, sport and commercial, definitely needs to be in the guiding principles to protect and preserve for future generations. Huiwei Shen suggested that this may fit in to the eco-tourism.
- Matt Surrency added that much of the hunting lands are also silviculture or some other type of designation. **Billy Burke responded that most of the hunting lands are likely covered under something else, but we will look at it and make sure it is addressed.**
- Kent Wimmer recommend to not fragment farms and forests creating unmanageable and unproductive tracts and fragments.
- Charles Lee added to the hunting lands discussion that there are 2 categories of hunting lands. The first is covered under guiding principles #7 and #8. These are identified under conservation lands. The second category are those on private lands or farms and silviculture lands. If we consider those lands, then hunting should be covered. Christine Kefauver thanked him for that input.
- Eric Anderson commented on the fragmentation of the land. This is not as big of an issue as general access to the road for them to conduct their business and logistics if they have to. Christine Kefauver asked Eric if ensuring access to the marketplace covered this? Eric Anderson responded that they will need access to the road for cattle crossings, moving equipment, etc. This is a bigger issue than fragmenting the land. The road can help with the changing supply chain that COVID-19 has shown. Kent Wimmer responded that this probably goes to identifying alignments and the PD&E. He asked, how do you lay out these corridors without going through the middle of a farm instead of around it? Billy Burke responded that’s a perfect example of an instruction. Billy Burke had Jenn Rhodes add a note on #13, reading “hunting, fragmentation, and access.”
- Billy Burke then presented guiding principle #6 about economic development.
- Christine Kefauver commented that this guiding principle limits nothing and we can apply the agriculture comment here. She added that we heard about diversification of the economy and the growth of that. Is this inclusive for what you want to see as a guiding principle?
- Valerie Hanchar said that in the rural areas the jobs are over in Ocala, and she asked if this was an area where maybe they could add to help local areas with their mass transit to help the

transportation needs of the outlying to go into big towns. She pointed out transit systems like SunTran help provide transportation from rural to employment areas. Billy Burke looked to see if maybe it was better suited under the transportation guiding principle or as an instruction. Valerie Hanchar added that this helps with the elderly that need to get to doctor's appointments and can help get traffic off the highways which is a bonus for everybody.

- Paul Owens commented that on the economic development principle, it should reflect some sensitivity to the existing businesses in rural communities. Depending on the alignment of a highway that diverts traffic from local businesses, a guiding principle should acknowledge that. There are ways in the planning that could provide for existing businesses.
- Charles Lee said the issue that he had with this was the compatibility with comprehensive plans. All economic development is not always good. A pop-up facility done on the fly might be something that the community has not planned for and that the land use maps do not include. This can be a rogue kind of thing. These need to have some community reality to it so that the local governments can plan for this. He recommended a linkage or modifier word that enhances economic development consistent with local comprehensive plans and future land use maps. This should be specific enough that it mentions local plans and these are not frozen in time but it should be handled robustly so that it can trickle down to the others. Christine Kefauver asked if the cross-cutting principles talked about earlier covers it sufficiently? Charles Lee said yes if it is specific enough.
- **Commissioner Kathy Bryant suggested to add "where appropriate" to the end of the current wording for #6.** This guiding principle shouldn't be interpreted as that we are creating a path to create economic development. Perception is reality and someone from the general public may perceive that the road is being chosen for economic development.
- Eric Anderson agreed with Kathy Bryant. He said that economic development is a lot of things combined together and they all have to move together fluidly. Comprehensive plans change every 5, 10, or 15 years and change as people come and go. All of the comprehensive plans change and they are going to have to be fluid. **Huiwei Shen responded that this is where communication with the locals and partnership is important. We will address these comments and look for how to include them.** Billy Burke had Jenn Rhodes add a note reading "consistent with local preference" on #6. Another note was added that read "where appropriate, and protects existing businesses" on #6.
- Danielle Ruiz said that guiding principle #6 is broad but appropriate for the topic at hand. Economic development is kind of a broad brush across the state and communities. Perhaps change "protects" to "supports." Billy Burke had Jenn Rhodes take note of this, adding "supports" on #6.
- Billy Burke moved to the next set of principle including wildlife and connectivity guiding principles, #9 and #10; water resource principles, #11 and #12; and finally conservation lands, #7 and #8.
- Kent Wimmer brought up that the Wekiva Parkway had an advising committee and this may need to be added to the guiding principles. The wording from the Wekiva Parkway guiding principles was read. Kent would like to see a group like this developed by the guiding principles. Huiwei Shen responded that FDOT has begun steps to talk with environmental groups. Do you want it broader or more direct? Kent Wimmer responded that it could be broader. It could include more wide-ranging things when we need to address environmental resources and conservation lands. **Huiwei Shen said that we can come back with some language for the Task Force.**
- Kent Wimmer asked when is the best time to bring up the layers that he suggested? Huiwei Shen answered that they keep working with staff to update the tool. The next meeting will look at how to use the guiding principles to narrow the path/course. Charles has also mentioned this. Kent Wimmer said thank you and that he had provided staff this information. He recommended that FDOT should move beyond the supporting of land acquisition program, rather that FDOT should fund this on a 2:1 value ratio and make a firm commitment on what will be done to replace these lands. Huiwei Shen said that M-CORES offers a unique opportunity for these lands and they will look into this.
- **Jason Lauritsen said it would be helpful to have all of the elements in the Wekiva language that Kent mentioned to compare to the current principles we have.** He mentioned that as he went through the guiding principles he created recommendations for enhancement areas and

opportunities and shared that document with Christine. He hoped this may be available to the Task Force. He would like a guiding principle around the idea that there are historical impacts that could be identified as enhancement opportunities, even if the alignment does not go through there. This can be for existing roads that fragment lands and currently do not have adequate wildlife crossings. He supports #9 but understood that it was limited to the alignment. He wanted to know if the alignment is occurring elsewhere in the study area, can a list of priority areas be created to look at for mitigation. Christine Kefauver said it seems what you are mentioning may be under #9? Jason Lauritsen agreed with #9, and that maybe it broadly covers it. **Huiwei Shen asked if it would be ok to work this into an instruction?** Jason said yes.

- Huiwei Shen asked subject matter expert David Bogardus to weigh in. David Bogardus says in terms of mitigation, we would be evaluating that during the PD&E and having those conversations with FWC and FDEP. **Huiwei Shen suggested that maybe if we capture the thought about regional mitigation that should capture Jason's comments.**
- Jason Lauritsen said thank you for taking my comments and working them into the guiding principles.
- Charles Lee suggested that some of the language for the conservation lands guiding principles have gotten very ambiguous and do not provide much specific guidance. Based on the meeting #5 guiding principles, we were in a much better position there. He read through the guiding principles from TF meeting #5. He added that they gave specific direction that is now lost in the principles presented today. He requested to go back and start from TF meeting #5 again. Huiwei Shen said the ambiguous language was an attempt to stay at a high-level, but we are looking to go back and add specifics. We are also going to look at getting rid of the qualifying language. Charles Lee responded that he doesn't think that shifting the specific language to the instructions is acceptable. He specifically requested to go back to the TF meeting #5 language and start there to give guidance to specific areas. He added that this needs to be directive language. **Huiwei Shen responded that we are going to add more specifics to the guiding principles.** Charles Lee suggested to begin with the word "avoid" not "enhance." There is a first things first proposition here. Huiwei Shen answered that we will go back in and add specifics, but we also want to hear from other Task Force members.
- Eric Anderson commented that "future conservation lands" is kind of a broad term. Does that mean we are going to just avoid the list of lands that is considered for conservation? Most of these lands will never be purchased by the state because they can't afford them. Billy Burke said the reason it is on there is because it was a priority for someone. Generally as a goal it was added to move forward as a statewide or regional goal.
- Bradley Arnold said that because the environmental science is a key component of the public comment, he would like FDOT to think about whether the environment committee that could continue through the PD&E would allow for the mitigation component. This would work early in the process allowing the environmental committee to work with FDOT to help resolve the corridor impacts. He doesn't want to get bogged down in going backwards in our process. He added that just because there is something sitting on the map as a potential conservation land does not mean the owner has any intention of selling. The committee will allow for more information about the environmental components.
- David Bogardus said he heard an interest in the flexibility to explore mitigation options. He clarified that in the PD&E there is a mitigation plan that is developed and incorporates stakeholders on what that may include or look like. The specific language should capture the desire for further exploration.
- Charles Lee added that by law in Florida, lands can only be included on the acquisition lists if the seller is willing. By no means do those lists include all of the lands. The lands that appear on those lists are there because they have been prioritized and agreed on by the private land owner. **Huiwei Shen responded that we probably need more precise language to narrow this down.**
- Christine Kefauver asked if there are any conversations about the water resources. She asked Water Management District Task Force members to review and discuss if they have comments.
- Billy Burke added that some of the comments from the other ones will probably apply as well.

- *Jennette Seachrist said that the current language generally covers the needs of the Water Management Districts, but she appreciated the conversations that have happened so far.*
- *Charles Lee went back to the TF meeting #5 draft and read the water resources guiding principles. He urged them to consider adding the specifics back in. **Christine Kefauver responded that we will certainly go back as Huiwei mentioned and look at adding some of those specifics back in.***
- *Valerie Hanchar agreed with Charles that the water definitions need to be a lot more detailed than what there is now.*

2:30 pm	Task Force Report Outline and Drafting Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huiwei Shen, FDOT Chief Planner • Task Force Members
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- Huiwei Shen discussed the report process. The report should be delivered by November 15, 2020.
- Huiwei Shen also discussed and presented a draft report outline that includes: transmittal letter, introduction, Task Force overview, study area overview, Task Force recommendations, action plan, and appendices. The Task Force recommendations is the heart of the report. Staff will format in the text that is approved by the Task Force. These include narratives to address problems that need to be considered and refined.
- **Huiwei Shen then mentioned that to address Kent Wimmer and Bradley Arnold’s request for an environmental advisory committee, meeting #7 will look at this further and see if it falls into the recommendations or action plan.** Huiwei Shen also mentioned the need for consensus on the report.
- Huiwei Shen discussed the report drafting process. Meeting #7 will include draft report sections with the Task Force recommendations for the Task Force to see. We will compile and document all of the received comments made by Task Force members and make them available. We will also show how we addressed each comment.
- Christine opened the floor for questions.
- There were no questions or comments.

2:45 pm	Corridor Planning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will Watts, FDOT Chief Engineer • Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead • Task Force Members
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- Will Watts discussed the corridor planning activities.
- Potential enhancements include improved water quality, additional wildlife crossings and design elements, and connecting and expanding multi-use trails. These have been discussed in previous meetings. Other enhancements include improved water flow, connecting and expanding conservation lands, providing and preserving right-of-way for utilities, and connecting and expanding wildlife corridors.
- The concept of co-location has frequently been discussed. There are various connectivity gaps that can be discussed as well.
- Will Watts presented the connectivity gaps. First, he showed the Florida Ecological Greenways Network critical linkages to identify connectivity gaps. The existing conservation areas are overlaid to help identify gaps that are not protected. These can be identified in the guiding principles to help with mitigation or enhancement. Planning and design processes can be developed to aid in the protection and or preservation of these gaps.
- Next, Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) are identified as water restoration needs and overlaid to show how the ecological connectivity gaps can be utilized.
- Trail gaps are then overlaid to show water restoration potential with the connectivity gaps.
- In the next meeting, instructions will show how these connectivity gaps can be used in the PD&E.

2:55 pm	Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jared Perdue, Task Force Chair • Christine Kefauver, Facilitator
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- Secretary Perdue recapped the next steps. The recorded meeting and meeting summary will be posted on the M-CORES website.
- Task Force members should send comments and suggestions to Jennifer Stults for the next meeting.
- Christine explained the public comment period and instructions.

3:00 pm	Public Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jared Perdue, Task Force Chair • Christine Kefauver, Facilitator • Production Staff
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- Lindsay Cross – St. Petersburg, FL
 - Florida Conservation Voters
 - Task Force members should've received an email on Monday sharing a tally of public comments showing that an overwhelming number of Floridians are against these roads
 - A group categorized these comments as for, against, or neutral
 - FDOT is essentially discounting these since they are form letters
 - The comments have been provided because of Task Force requests
 - Florida Tax Watch looked at the economic burden of toll roads on Florida taxpayers
 - The cost for Suncoast would require tolls in excess of current toll revenues for all roads
 - Last month Governor DeSantis vetoed water conservation funds
 - Money was moved from rural communities to M-CORES
 - Much of what the community desires should be done without the toll roads
 - The strong public opposition should be taken into account
 - This can be accomplished through No Build
- Herman Younger – Gainesville, FL
 - Sierra Club
 - No-roads to ruin coalition
 - A public information request was completed to obtain public comments from FDOT
 - 88% of comments were not in favor of the project
 - This did not include written forms
 - You have a duty to act in the public's best interest
- Amy Datz – Tallahassee, FL
 - Environmental scientist
 - One issue is the number of public comments
 - Request that pro v can be submitted
 - Concern is for people who do not have internet connectivity and need this project
 - This project is vital for citizens who cannot submit electronic form letters
 - Who is covering the cost of interstate maintenance?
 - Using opponents' logic, these interstates should be shut down because they do not pay for themselves
 - Already seeing dirt roads being paved in anticipation for this road
 - Supports wildlife crossings to be enhanced
 - FDOT has won many awards for design for wildlife crossings
 - For agricultural concerns, there should be toll relief for local traffic
- Michael McGrath – Ft. Myers, FL
 - Sierra Club organizer
 - Record breaking coronavirus cases

- Claimed that things have improved but still logged record levels of virus
- Each M-CORES project lacks a needs document
- Projected costs are in the billions of dollars
- FDOT has failed to reveal how they plan to finance this project
- M-CORES is not cut even though other budgets are cut
- The pandemic has blown up our economy but this project is still ongoing
- Call off M-CORES now, No Build
- Eugene Kelly – Brooksville, FL
 - FL Native Plants Society
 - Question of financial feasibility was discussed in late 2019, it has been relegated and dismissed as an item for the Task Force recommendation
 - Sometimes it is suggested government should be run more like a business
 - Whether you believe in this or not, we should live within our means
 - Governor recently vetoed \$1 billion from the budget that included affordable housing and local roads, but M-CORES was not touched
 - Where will this money come from?
 - Tax Watch just released a report against the financial feasibility on these roads
 - There is no reason to believe the Turnpike Connector would be any different
 - Hopes some Task Force members will look at their responsibility differently
 - The Task Force can put the brakes on M-CORES
 - It can be mentioned that there is not financial feasibility and an unrealistic timeline
 - M-CORES is not urgent
- Matthew Schwartz – Ft. Lauderdale, FL
 - South Florida Wildlands Association
 - Would like to hear M-CORES not have to be a toll corridor
 - Can still provide enhancements through co-location without tolls
 - Increase quality of life for rural communities
 - Can't accept new highways through wetlands
 - Urge Task Force members to push new bill to provide funds for state highways around the state
 - There has not been a needs analysis
 - How can you conduct the planning process without a needs assessment?
 - The process has no legitimacy to the public
 - M-CORES will trigger enormous amounts of growth
 - Disaster for the Florida Panther
- Vivian Young – Tallahassee, FL
 - 1000 Friends of Florida
 - Sent email recommending language following the format of FDOTs last meeting for high-level needs
 - These are based directly on State Statute
 - Worked hard to come up with clear recommendations
 - Believes the M-CORES statute sets a higher standard than for other highways
 - For example, a purpose is to revitalize rural communities
 - If this is the case, interchanges must not be included to draw away business activity from local streets
 - Land should be protected from development before the highway is built
 - The statute says to protect resources, not minimize, and this should include secondary development
 - Look at autonomous vehicles
 - Agree with Tax Watch report
- Richard Grosso – Plantation, FL
 - Practicing environment and land use law for 30 years

- Statute says the task force should look at needs and environmental topics
- Doesn't seem like the Task Force has done that but pushed it to the PD&E study
- You are violating the law if you have not determined the environmental impact or whether this is going to be a benefit or not
- You have jumped to the "how" you are going to do this
- You are taking the same approach as Miami-Dade took to run through the Everglades
- You have not determined the feasibility or the tolls
- You haven't looked at the other studies that have been done
- You haven't looked at the co-locations
- You haven't looked at the COVID crisis
- Michael Czewrwinski – Citrus County
 - Florida environmental scientist
 - Opponents are concerned of direct, indirect, and secondary impacts on quality of life and urban sprawl
 - These are related to guiding principles 1, 5, and 6
 - Comprehensive plans are having issues keeping up with today
 - A guiding principle could be made to talk about land speculation and development
 - Could potentially preserve intersections for high speed rail parking rather than gas stations
 - During the last hurricane evacuations there were issues with the provision of stations for fuel and other facilities right on the roads rather than have the drivers exit
 - Issues with cars and trucks getting fuel at these facilities
 - This can avoid secondary impacts on local traffic

TBD	Adjourn	● Jared Perdue, Task Force Chair
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- Secretary Perdue thanked everyone for participating and the public comments.
- Meeting adjourned.

Notes Taken By: Mackenzie Bland & Levi Hannon. Compiled by: Victor Muchuruza

Attachment

Northern Turnpike Corridor Guiding Principles Notes taken during the meeting